

Transcript of the Testimony of
Proces Verbal of Felipe de Jesus Avila-Soto

Date: December 16, 2025

**Felipe de Jesus Avila-Soto, et al v. South Central
Sugarcane Growers Association, et al**

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EXHIBIT

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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA
LAFAYETTE DIVISION

FELIPE DE JESUS
AVILA-SOTO, and
others similarly
situated,

Plaintiffs

VERSUS

SOUTH CENTRAL SUGARCANE
GROWERS ASSOCIATION AND
STERLING SUGARS, LLC

Defendants

* * * * *

PROCES VERBAL regarding the deposition of FELIPE DE JESUS AVILA-SOTO, taken through an interpreter, on the 16th day of December. The witness and Mr. Morton and Mr. Davis attended the deposition in person at the Hotel Azul Talavera Country Club, Parque Industrial Lajat, 27259 Torreon, Coah; Ms. McDiarmid, Mr. Knoepp, the court reporter and interpreter attended remotely, via Zoom.

APPEARANCES :

LAW OFFICES OF DAWSON MORTON
(By: Dawson Morton, Esquire
1808 Sixth Street
Berkeley, California 94710
(dawson@dawsonmorton.com))

- and -

James C. Knoepp, Esquire
1612 Crestwood Drive
Columbia, South Carolina 29205

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(Attorneys for the Plaintiffs)

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1 APPEARANCES CONTINUED:

2

3 PHELPS DUNBAR
4 (By: Brandon Davis, Esquire)
5 365 Canal Street
6 Suite 2000
7 New Orleans, Louisiana 70130

8

9 - and -

10

11 PHELPS DUNBAR
12 (By: Molly McDiarmid, Esquire)
13 400 Convention Street
14 Suite 1100
15 Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802
16 (Attended via Zoom)

17 Attorneys for Defendants

18

19 REPORTED BY:

20

21 Cathy Renee' Powell, CCR
22 Professional Shorthand Reporters
23 (504) 529-5255

24

25 MR. KNOEPP:

26

27 We are just going to put on the
28 record that the interpreter quit, and we
29 don't have a replacement interpreter,
30 Mr. Avila has been here since 9; it is now
31 4 o'clock.

32

33 MR. DAVIS:

34

35 Jim, you have not made an
36 appearance. Are you intending to make an
37 appearance now for this proces verbal?

38

39 MR. KNOEPP:

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1 I did make an appearance with
2 Cathy.

3 ATTORNEY 3:

4 Are you on the record now, are or
5 is Dawson still --

6 MR. KNOEPP:

7 If I need to add anything, I
8 will; but I'm sure Dawson can handle it. I
9 mean, I was present for the entire
10 deposition, so if there is something that I
11 feel like I should add, then I may do that.
12 (Discussion off the record.)

13 MR. DAVIS:

14 We are going back on the record
15 to make a Proces Verbal.

16 ATTORNEY 3:

17 I showed you a copy of a document
18 I marked as Exhibit 3, your Notice of
19 Deposition. I will attach that to the
20 record.

21 Since sometime around 2:30 or
22 2:45, we have not been able to proceed with
23 the interpreter we engaged to interpret the
24 deposition for us. What we have done since
25 then, we have waited for the agency to send

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1 us another interpreter.

2 We have not received a telephone
3 back from the agency. I am certainly
4 available to remain in Mexico today,
5 tomorrow, even on Thursday or Friday until
6 we can locate a replacement; otherwise,
7 after having waited for approximately
8 2 hours, we are not able to proceed.

9 Dawson, you have indicated that
10 Mr. Avila is available and will be ready to
11 proceed when we get the interpretation
12 services we need, because apparently, our
13 interpreter has left and won't be back
14 today.

15 MR. MORTON:

16 I agree with that. Mr. Avila
17 took the day from work for this deposition,
18 and this is not something of his choosing.
19 We took a break for the interpreter's
20 benefit, and then the interpreter never
21 came back from that break, and has left,
22 and the deposition is not able to proceed.

23 Mr. Avila is here and available;
24 he has been here since 9, and it is now 2
25 o'clock, so we are making a record.

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1 MR. DAVIS:

2 After the lunch break, I
3 asked Mr. Morton to confer with me on
4 additional dates to complete the testimony.
5 Have you had an opportunity to do that?

6 MR. MORTON:

7 I told you previously, Mr. Davis,
8 that we don't believe it is appropriate to
9 re-notice Mr. Avila, as he appeared today
10 and took time off, and counsel traveled
11 from California to be here, and Mr. Avila
12 has been present the whole day, and we
13 don't believe he should be required to
14 reappear.

15 MR. DAVIS:

16 So have you given any thought as
17 to how you want to complete the testimony?
18 Or are you going to approach the magistrate
19 for assistance in being able to complete
20 the deposition, at a convenient time for
21 all parties?

22 ATTORNEY 4:

23 Mr. Avila took off from work and
24 has been present the entire day for you to
25 ask him questions.

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1 MR. DAVIS:

2 I understand that. What I am
3 trying to discuss with you now is, well,
4 what do we need to do, as far as do we need
5 to go to the magistrate for guidance on how
6 this will be resolved? I am aware that,
7 today, the witness has been cooperative,
8 but given the fact that Christmas is next
9 week, so have you given any thought to when
10 you would like to contact the magistrate.

11 MR. MORTON:

12 Well, you guys can make a motion
13 and we will respond to it.

14 MR. DAVIS:

15 Okay. And then, have you given
16 any thought to whether you want to simply
17 contact the magistrate for a status
18 conference? Obviously, I would prefer to
19 manage this without the necessity of a
20 motion.

21 MR. MORTON:

22 I will talk with my colleague
23 about that.

24 MR. DAVIS:

25 Thank you. That's all I have.

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1 (Which concluded the record.)
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1 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

2

3 This certification is valid only for a
4 transcript accompanied by my original signature
5 and original required seal on this page.

6

7 I, Cathy Renee' Powell, Certified
8 Court Reporter in and for the State of
9 Louisiana, as the officer before whom this
10 Proces Verbal was taken, do hereby certify that
11 this record was reported by me in the stenotype
12 reporting method, was prepared and transcribed
13 by me or under my personal direction and
14 supervision, and is a true and correct
15 transcript to the best of my ability and
16 understanding; that the transcript has been
17 prepared in compliance with transcript format
18 guidelines required by statute or by rules of
19 the board, that I have acted in compliance with
20 the prohibition on contractual relationships, as
21 defined by Louisiana Code of Civil Procedure
22 Article 1434 and in rules and advisory opinions
23 of the board; that I am not related to counsel
24 or the parties herein, nor am I otherwise
25 interested in the outcome of this matter.

15

16

17

18 CATHY RENEE' POWELL
19 CERTIFIED COURT REPORTER

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